

That would be enough

This has been issue 181 of *To Win Just Once*, published 26th January 2018. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2018

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* to Mike by 9th February 2018.

Orders for *LPBS*, shots in *Trophy Hunter* and all other contributions to Pevans by Monday, 19th February 2018.

(Next deadlines are: 16th/23rd March, 20th/27th April, 25th May/1st June)

Waiting lists

En Garde! new players are always welcome in *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*. You will need the rules to *En Garde!* in order to play: www.engarde.co.uk

Railway Rivals – the current game is in its closing stages. Rob Pinkerton and Jonathan Palfrey are up for the next one, who else? This siwll be on the Surrey and Hampshire map – working copy and rules provided.

Star Trader – new players are welcome to join the current game (to gain experience, if nothing else). Rules provided.

Online games

Agricola (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans, Alex Everard

Imhotep (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Innovation (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans

Keyflower (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Brad Martin

Pax Porfiriana (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Funkenschlag (Power Grid) (at famdepaus.nl): Pevans

Puerto Rico (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans

Through the Ages (at www.boardgaming-online.com): Mark Cowper, Pevans

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 181 was written and edited by Pevans with additional material by Nik Luker. The *LPBS* masthead (page 26) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as are the drawings on pages 17, 28 and 30. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Photos were taken by Pevans (except for the *Tavarua* photos by Nik Luker), who played with Photoshop.

Printed and published by Margam Evans Limited

(A company registered in England and Wales, number 05152842,

Registered office: 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF)

Tel: 020 7183 6256, E-mail: TWJO@pevans.co.uk, Web: www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO

To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)

Issue 181: Jan-Feb 2018
(LPBS 313: March 1670)

£2.25 (+ postage)
and online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
SdM	Swindelle d'Masses	13	F	OK	B.Bdr-General QOC/HGds Bde Maj.	4		Both	4	Craig Pearson
LOUT	Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles	13	+ 39	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RM/FMshl's Aide	2	Sue	Both	5	Dave Marsden
CLD	Charles Louis Desapear	13	+ 39	Comfy	Bdr-General/2nd Army QM Gen.	3	Emma	Both	4	Martin Jennings
IM	Inigo Montoya	12	32	Comfy	Major GDM/D/LtGen's Aide (BdLS)	6	Deb	Both	3	Graeme Morris
JD	Jacques Diabolick	11	F	Comfy	Colonel PM/1 F Brigade Maj.	1		Hunt	3	Cameron Wood
FAG	Sir Felix Anton Gauchepied'er	11	+ 41	Withy	Lt.Colonel KM/Gen's Aide (SdIC)	8		Hunt	4	Jason Fazackarley
RBCB	Raoul Bernard de Chenin Blanc	9	- 6	OK		5			4	Olaf Schmidt
HD	Henri Dubois	9	28	Comfy	Major DG	1		Hunt	3	Wayne Little
XM	Xavier Money	9	11	Comfy	Lt.Colonel GDMD	5	Betty	F&P	3	Pam Udowiczenko
FSdM	Florent Sans de Machine	8	- 8	Comfy		3			4	Nik Luker
SAD	Simon Alfred Devereux	8	18	Poor	Captain DG	6		HGds	2	Paul Wilson
JZ	Jacques Zelad	7	RIP							Francesca Weal
PDG	Padamus Da Grim	6	14	Poor	Captain GDMD	6		F&P	2	Graeme Wilson
GS	Guido Spoons	6	13	OK	Captain CPC	1			3	Ray Vahey
LI	L'Inconnu	6	8	OK		5	Anna	F&P	1	Gerald Udowiczenko
VdC	Vulson de Chalais	6	+ 18	Poor	Major 27M	3		F&P	2	Brian Heasley
RdL	Robert d'Lancier	5	10	OK	Captain RM	4		F&P	4	Steven Malacek
X2		4	0	OK		4			4	Mark Nightingale
AF	Augustin Fourier	3	7	Poor	Subaltern GDMD	2		RP	3	Brick Amundsen
BS	Balzac Slapdash	3	+ 9	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	9			4	Matthew Wale

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP means that he died.

+ against SL means it went up this month, - means it went down.

Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, Withy = 5000-10000, Rich = 10000-25000, Fthy = 25000+

Last seen is the lady the character was last seen with in public.

EC is Endurance Class: 1 = <60, 2 = 60-90, 3 = 91-120, 4 = 121-159, 5 = 160-200, 6 = 201+

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
BdZ	Viscount Bill de Zmerchant	25	75	Comfy	Fld Marshal/War Minister	7	Ada	Flr	3	Tim Macaire
PLS	Viscount Pierre le Sang	25	62	Withy	General/State Min.	7	Guinevere	Flr	4	Bill Howell
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	36	Rich	General	9		Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
UXB	Count Uther Xavier-Beaureg'd	23	62	Withy	B.General/2nd Army Commdr	16	Henrietta	Flr	4	Pete Card
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	23	53	Fithy	B.Lt-General/Cav Div Commdr	21		Flr	6	Ben Brown
EB	Marquis Etienne Brule	23+71	Withy	B.Bdr-General	DG/Chancellor	3	Belle	Flr	4	James McReynolds
AdA	Count Amant d'Au	22	44	Rich	B.Bdr-General RFG	9		Flr	5	David Brister
FdA	Viscount Frele d'Acier	22+70	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	DG	15	Freda	Flr	3	Peter Farrell
DdE	Sir Duncan d'Eauneurts	20	47	Comfy	B.Bdr-General KM/CPS	5		Flr	5	Paul Lydiate
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	20	44	Rich	Lt.Colonel RFG	23	Jacky	Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
RS	Viscount Richard Shapmes	20	43	Withy	Lt-General/Prov.Mil.Gov	15		Flr	4	Charles Popp
SdIC	Baron Sebastian de la Creme	19+57	Comfy	B.General/Min w/o Port		4	Di	Flr	5	Alan Percival
BRJS	Baron Beau Reese Jean Seine	18	48	Withy	Major RFG/Min w/o Port	4	Maggie	Flr	3	Bill Hay
WNM	Viscount Was Nae Me	18	47	Rich	B.Lt-General/2nd Div Commdr	11	Vera	Both	3	Mark Farrell
TC	Baron Terence Cuckpowder	18	41	Withy	Bdr-General/HGds Brigadier	6		Both	4	Mike Dommett
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	16	36	Rich	B.Lt-General	4		Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
SA2	Sir Sebastian Adis II	16	F	Comfy	Bdr-General/1st Army QM Gen.	6		Both	4	Mark Cowper
CC	Sir Chopine Camus	15	45	Withy	Bdr-General/Hvy Brigadier	8	Sheila	Both	4	Stewart Macintyre
LdH	Sir Leonard de Hofstadt	15	40	Comfy	Bdr-General/Gds Brigadier	5	Frances	Both	5	Neil Packer
GIS	Sir Gaston le Somme	14	33	Comfy	B.Bdr-General RM/1st Army Adj't	2	Bess	Both	3	Jerry Spencer
BdLS	Bernard de Lur-Saluces	14	29	Withy	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen	7		Both	2	Rob Pinkerton
JdI	Sir Jean d'Ice	14	F	OK	Major CG	5		Both	3	Tym Horton
JE	Baron Jean Ettonique	14	F	Withy	Major DG/Gen's Aide (2nd Army)	11		5	Tony Norris-West	
AdF	Sir Alan de Frocked	14+42	Withy	Colonel	CG/1st Div Adjutant	3	Madelaine	Both	2	Charles Burrows

Chatter

Last issue's chatter didn't include the third thing that I was enjoying through December: the case of Christmas ales I got in early in the month. Mmm... beer! I have been enjoying a fine selection of winter ales and festive brews, generally with an alcohol content of at least 5%. Beer for sipping, rather than quaffing, I always feel.

Oops! No-one seems to have noticed – or at least, they haven't commented – that I included *Riga* in both parts of my Spiel report. I have corrected this in the version I've now put online: www.pevans.co.uk/Reviews/Spiel17.html. As I play more of the new games, I will add them in to this report (they should also appear in *TWJO*).

Watching things

It may have escaped your attention, but TV channel Pick is showing *Babylon 5* from the beginning. Veteran readers will be aware that I like to re-watch it every few years – I have all five seasons. On videocassettes. I thought I'd dip into it on Pick ... watch significant episodes ... enjoy the fun... Then, of course, I got hooked all over again: "The year is 2259 ... the year the great war came upon us" sends shivers down my spine every time.

I find knowing what will happen adds resonance to the characters and plots. Watching the incomparable Londo Mollari carousing his way through the fleshpots is more significant when you know what he becomes. Seeing the angry G'Kar inveighing against the treacherous Centauri has more meaning when you know how he develops.

Pick is now on to season two and I'm realising again how much is packed into each episode. The one I'm watching as I type introduces us to the Techno-mages, who Ambassador Mollari antagonises, while newly promoted Commander Ivanova tries to resolve a civil war amongst the Drazi and Security chief Garibaldi decides whether to return to his post. There's just a hint or two of the over-arching, five-year plot, but it is there in the background: "I hear the sound of billions calling your name ... your victims."

Great White Hunter → Trophy Hunter

Well, the responses I've had have been in favour of changing the name and I think I'll do this immediately. The idea of making Gorillas worth negative points had a mixed reception, but more were in favour than against. However, Nik Luker thought this would be "a bit harsh". His suggestion was "An increased number of negative point Monkeys on the other hand might be a bit of a laugh..." Indeed. Maybe I'll try both and see what works better. Or is funnier.

Chris Baylis proposed a Space Invaders theme. Graeme Morris suggested re-theming the game as Jurassic (Park) Hunter, with the players taking the Bob

Peck role and checking an outbreak of dinosaurs. In this case, the thing to watch out for would be the velociraptors: shooting one dead is fine, but “end up right next to one and (“clever girl”) it’s serious payback time on the hunter.” That has a certain appeal.

Bruinburg *En Garde!*

This is the new name for the *En Garde!* game run by Nick Pinner. It is named after “the main city of Bruinburg (the whole setting is now a Germanic electoral city-state in a imagi-empire torn by political/religious civil war).” Nick has added to the base rules, taking much from the late lamented *The Paris Tribune*. The game is running monthly with fifteen players at the moment and room, says Nick, for at least another fifteen. You can contact Nick at nick.pinner@gmail.com for more information.

Online games

I was excited to see Carl Chudyk’s terrific card game, *Innovation*, arrive at Board Game Arena (www.en.BoardGameArena.com). I’ve had a lot of fun playing the physical game and haven’t exhausted its possibilities yet. So having it online is brilliant! Who’d like to join me for a game or three?

TWJO online

The PDF versions of *TWJO* 180 were downloaded 133 times in December – though they were only published on 21st. Issue 179 attracted 85 further downloads across the month, taking it to 314 in two months. There were 35 further downloads for *TWJO* 178, taking it to 246 since publication.

I’m still intrigued by the odd websites that continue to show up as referring visitors to me: theherbalclinic.org, for example, apparently sent 101 visitors to pevans.co.uk in December. This is particularly surprising as there doesn’t seem to be a website for that domain. Intriguing or worrying?

Speeding through

Pevans reviews the “Fast Forward” trilogy

I always look forward to seeing what new game Friedemann Friese has for us at Spiel. This year was a surprise: he had three new games from his imprint, 2F Spiele (www.2f-spiele.de), grouped under the banner of “Fast Forward” (and published in English by Stronghold Games – www.strongholdgames.com). What they have in common is that you learn each game by playing it. Inside the small, square box is a pack of large format cards with an important message on the first card: “do not shuffle”. Drawing the first card reveals the first rule and the game gets under way.

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Last
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	
54	Madelaine de Proust	17		AdF
35	Katy Did	16	I	
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	BRJS
55	Jacky Tinne	16		JJ
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	PIS
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	LdH
21	Helen Highwater	14	W	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		
11	Laura de Land	13		
16	Ophelia Derrière	13		
26	Ella Fant	13	B	
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	
30	Leia Orgasma	13	B	
45	Cath de Thousands	13		
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	
12	Charlotte de Gaulle	12		
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	UXB
28	Vera Cruz	12		WNM
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	GIS
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	LOUT
4	Anne Tique	11	W	
9	Deb Onairre	11	I	IM
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		CC
63	Carole Singeurs	11		
20	Emma Roides	10	I	CLD
33	Anna Rexique	10	I	LI
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	SdIC
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	
56	Ingrid la Suède	10		
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
57	Ava Crisp	9	I	
59	May Banquot l'Idée	9		
2	Betty Kant	8	I	XM
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
41	Marie Antoinette	8	B/I	
49	Mary Huana	8	B/I/W	
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	FdA
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	
50	Ulla Leight	7	I	
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	EB
13	Josephine Buonoparte	6	I/W	
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	
15	Ada Andabettoir	5	B/I	BdZ
25	Lois de Lô	5	B	

Col	Regiments																
	RFG	CG	KM	DG	OO	ALC	CPC	RM	GDMD	13F	PLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn	
LCol	AdA	AdF	DdE	EB	SdM+	N1	N6	GIS									
Maj 1	BRJS	Jdl	FAG	JE	N2	N4+	N3	LOUT									
Maj 2	N5+	N2	N6	HD	N1	N5	N1	N4									
Capt 1	N6	N3*	N1	N3	N2	N5	N1	N3									
Capt 2	N2	N2	N6	SAD	N2	N4	N1	N2									
Capt 3	N2	N5	N1	N6	N2*	N4	N1	N6*									
Capt 4	N4*	N2	N4*	N3*	N4	N3*	N3	N2*									
Capt 5																	
Capt 6																	

This table shows the ten senior positions in the 17 regiments by rank. Entries are Character abbreviations, N (+M/A) for NPCs, blank for vacant. * shows the regiment adjutant; + shows ranks held by characters with a (senior) brevet rank or an appointment elsewhere.

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	LdH/N/N5
Horse Guards Brigade	TC/N/SdM
Heavy Brigade	CC/N/N4
Dragoon Brigade	N6/N/N6
First Foot Brigade	N3/N/JD
Second Foot Brigade	N4/N/N2
Third Foot Brigade	N2/N/N5
Fourth Foot Brigade	N5/N/N6

Current CO/Aide/Brigade Major of each Brigade; entries are ID for player characters, “N” (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	F4	(Defence for Mar–May) RNHB
Colonel	N3	N6	N4	N2	N5
Attached	SdM	2 Bn CG		2 Sqn DG JD	SA2
Also at the Front					

This table shows the Colonels of the Frontier regiments (“N” + MA for NPCs), together with the volunteers assigned for the season.

Battle Results

Frontier regiment 1: 5
 Frontier regiment 2: 3
 Frontier regiment 3: 6

Frontier regiment 4: 3
 RNHB regiment: 4

Other Appointments

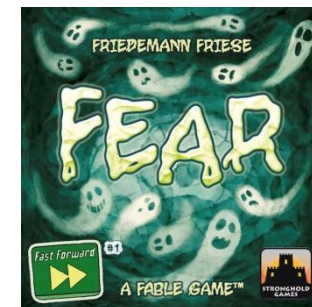
King’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Cardinal’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal LOU
Provincial Military Governors: RS/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant–General BdLS
Inspectors–General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety __	
Chancellor of the Exchequer EB (until April 1670)	
Minister of Justice __	
Minister of War BdZ (until August 1670)	
Minister of State PIS (until November 1670)	

Shows who holds appointments outside military units:
 ID for Characters, “N” for NPC, __ for vacant, “CPS” for additional posts held by the CPS.

The games have a ‘Legacy’ element, too (what Friedemann calls the “Fable” system). As you play, the rules develop and change. Playing one game doesn’t take long – I generally play several games in one session. At the end, the cards can be put away so that, the next time it’s played, you start from the state the game was left in. (Alternatively, the pack can be restored to its initial state.) Of course this gives the reviewer a bit of a problem: I can’t review the complete game without spoiling the fun of discovering how it develops. Hence, this review will describe how each game starts and then give some idea (but not too much detail, I hope) of how it develops.

Be afraid... (*Fear* reviewed)

Number one of the series is *Fear*, which is a deceptively simple card game. The first rule is that players can either draw a card or play a card. Hence, players’ first action will be to draw a card. This, they will find, has a number on it. Then they discover that the hand limit is three, forcing players to play a card when they have three in hand. The third rule is that if you cannot play a card without taking the total shown on the played cards above 15, you lose the game. (There has been some discussion of this rule, as the wording is not crystal clear, but I have checked that this is what was intended.) The winner is the player whose remaining cards add up to the most.



This is when you begin to see the game’s subtlety: you need high cards to win, but having high cards in hand may mean you lose. As you play further, you start to see different cards: negative numbers can be very useful. And some cards have actions that take effect when they’re played: reversing direction of play, for example. Thus the game gets more subtle as players try to manipulate play – as well as their hand of cards – in their favour. The final piece is that some cards go back in the box at the end of the game, while the others (not the rules cards) are shuffled and go on top of the deck for the next game. The crucial point is that this means you get further through the deck each time you play, discovering new rules and different cards.

A single game can be over in 10 minutes, which is why my group tends to play several games in a row. This also lets players start to psych each other out... I think *Fear* is a terrific game and another clever design from Friedemann. It makes an excellent filler, in part because you can play it for 10 minutes, half an hour or carry on until dinner time. However, it’s also a subtle game that rewards continued play.

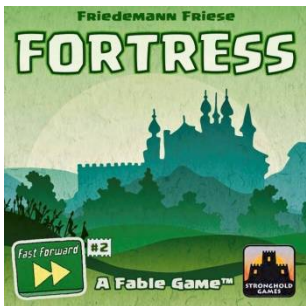
Fear is an entertaining card game (#1 in the “Fast Forward” series) designed by Friedemann Friese and published by 2F Spiele (in German) and Stronghold Games



Fear in play: the total is 14 - be afraid! Though everybody can pick up another card...

(in English). It is for 2-5 players, aged, 8+, and a single game takes about 15 minutes to play. I give it 8/10 on my highly subjective scale and thank Stephen Buonocore of Stronghold Games for providing a review copy.

Seize the Castle (*Fortress* reviewed)



The second “Fast Forward” game is *Fortress*, which is rather more involved than *Fear*. It starts the same, though, with players picking up cards, one at a time. Each of these has a number, along with a matrix that shows what a set of cards of this number is worth. This is the square of the number of cards times the value of the card. Thus two ‘3’s are worth 12 (two squared = 4, 4 x 3=12), while three of them is a set worth 27. As you can see, the value of a set increases quickly as you collect more of the same card.

Sets of cards can be used to capture ‘Fortresses’, the first of which appears in the deck soon after the game starts. They go into the centre of the table and players can take them instead of taking a card in their turn. The set of cards used to capture a fortress goes face down under the fortress card in front of the owner. These cards will now defend it against the other players. In order to take a fortress from another player, you must play a set that’s worth more. Of course,

Duels

Results of March’s duels

There were none.

Grudges to settle next month:

Still none!

“adv.” shows who (if anyone) has the advantage of higher Expertise: his first duelling sequence need only contain six actions.

New Characters

Francesca Weal gets the First son of a wealthy Gentleman: Init SL 5; Cash 550; MA 6; EC 2 (X1).

Duels held over to June

Sebastian Adis II versus Vulson de Chalais.

All duels listed above (including any to be voted on) must be fought next month. Orders conditional on a challenge being voted cause are acceptable.

Tables

Army Organisation and 1670’s Summer Deployment

First Army (Field Ops)	--/_/_/GIS/SA2
First Division (Field Ops)	--/_/_/AdF
Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - RFG CG KM	
Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) - GDMD PLLD	
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	JdG/_/_/_
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) - ALC CPC	
Second Army (Siege)	UXB/JE/N1/CLD
Frontier Division (Siege)	N1/N/N3
Frontier Regiments (Siege)	
Third Army (Defence)	N6/N/N2/N
Second Division (Defence)	WNM/N/N3
3rd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Defence) - 69A Gscn	
RNHB Regiment (Defence)	
Third Division (Defence)	--/_/_/N2
1st Foot Brigade (Defence) - RM PM	
2nd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 13F 53F	

Organisation and Deployment for the Campaign Season with Army and Division posts (Commander/Aide/Adjutant/QMG)

Entries are ID for player characters, “N” (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

a Germanic city-state – there's more about this in my Chatter (page 4).

Absent friends

I had no orders (“No Move Received”) from the following and they suffered the consequences:

PC Pierre Cardigan (Matt Shepherd) has NMR'd. Total now 1

X2 (Mark Nightingale) has been floated to start next month

Notes

The *En Garde!* rules are available to LPBS players at a reduced rate: see any month's Points Arising page at www.pevans.co.uk/LPBS.

There's a Yahoo! group for *En Garde!* players that provides a forum for players

Announcements

Alan de Frocked asks NPC Army Adjutant of Third Army to resign

Alan de Frocked applies for Army Adjutant of Second Army

Alan de Frocked applies for Army Adjutant of Third Army

Duncan d'Eauneurts applies for Commnr. of Public Safety

Etienne Brule applies for Chancellor of Exchequer

Felix Anton Gauchepied'er asks NPC Lt.Colonel of 13th Fusiliers to resign

Felix Anton Gauchepied'er applies for Commnr. of Public Safety

Gaston le Somme asks NPC Major 1 of Royal Marines to resign

Gaston le Somme asks NPC Captain 4 of Royal Marines to resign

of different games to swap stories and ideas. Sign up and get talking at: <http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/EnGardePlayers/>

Reminders: It is worth sending orders in even if they're a day or two late: I may be able to action the orders and should be able to use any press. It also reassures me you're still there.

Orders (and press) should be e-mailed to lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk – you'll get an automated reply when your message arrives in my mailbox. Please give your name and your character's name and specify actions in full (since it's without your character sheet). If you want queries answered before the deadline, e-mail LPBS@pevans.co.uk instead.

Gaston le Somme asks NPC Brigadier of 3rd Foot Brigade to resign

Guido Spoons asks NPC Major 2 of Crown Prince Cuirassiers to resign

Jean d'Ice asks NPC Lt.Colonel of Cardinal's Guard to resign

Jean Ettonique applies for Aide to General

Pierre le Sang asks NPC Aide to General (PIS) to resign

Simon Alfred Devereux applies for Regiment Adjutant of DG

Terence Cuckpowder applies for Commnr. of Public Safety

Vulson de Chalais applies for Aide to General

you don't know the value of the defenders, though you can see how many cards there are. The winner gets a card from the loser – as well as keeping/taking the fortress.

The deck contains three sand-timer cards and the game ends immediately when the third is drawn. The winner is the player with the most fortresses, with ties broken in favour of the lowest numbered fortress card. So, at the start of the game, players build up their hands, looking for sets. Things get interesting once the second sand-timer card appears. The game could end at any time now, so the competition is on to grab those fortresses. And then defend them against the others, which is easier said than done.

After a round of taking fortresses, the game becomes quite tense. The current leader is happy to take cards, while the others do so with trepidation – unless they've got a chance of seizing a fortress. The game end always comes as a surprise. To prepare for the next game, the winner's defenders go back in the box. They are replaced by a few cards off the top of the deck, shuffled in with the remaining number cards – and the sand-timers – to make a new playing deck. Thus you will gradually work deeper into the deck as you play more games.

As it stands, this sounds like an intriguing, if fairly light, game. What makes it something rather better, though, is the way it changes as you play more games. There are more fortresses, giving players more to do. There are different numbers



Fortress in play: The player on the left has the key fortress. Can I challenge them?



A closer look at the initial *Fortress* rules and first *Fortress*

on the cards, of course. There are cards that do things, such as taking a peek at some defenders. And there are new rules, which can even change how the game is won. One of the great things is that you will not know what most of these cards are until someone plays them. And this continues even when you're playing for the second or third time as the cards may not have come out before.

Given the random nature of drawing cards, there is a strong element of luck in the game. However, it plays quickly enough that you can play again and get your revenge. My group likes to play several games on the trot, enjoying the subtle changes from game to game. I really like the challenge it offers, not just in mastering the game, but in out-thinking the other players.

Fortress is a clever card game (#2 in the "Fast Forward" series) designed by Friedemann Friese and published by 2F Spiele (in German) and Stronghold Games (in English). It is for 2-4 players, aged, 10+, and a single game takes about 15 minutes to play. I give it 9/10 on my highly subjective scale and thank Stephen Buonocore of Stronghold Games for providing a review copy.

To: Viscount, General, Minister of State Le Sang

Sweetheart, so many titles for a man of such distinction, but to me you'll always be my handsome Pierry-Poos.

I am dropping you this little missive with regards to the coming vacancy for the Public Safety Commissioner just in case you'd like to consider little young me for the role. Now I know that Dunkie has been doing this job for the last year – and splendidly too – but surely he merits a greater position within Government now, more suited to his versatile talents? As one of your staunchest supporters, darling, I'd be delighted to ascend to a role within your inner circle (ooh-errr!) and this seems just the ticket, so to speak.

I already have an extensive wardrobe for all those Court sessions, plus I was a 'guest' of a former Commissioner, Monsieur Cockpowder, so have experience of the Bastille and all those rough, hairy brutes that comprise the staff.

So, sweetest, please do have a little ponder and bear me in mind you have

Points Arising

Next deadline is 19th Feb 2018

I've pushed the deadline back a few days as I will be busy over that weekend – playing in Shogun, this year's freeform game.

Etienne Brule's term as Chancellor of the Exchequer expires at the end of April. Anyone wishing to apply for this appointment should do so with their April orders (to take place at the start of May) – but bear in mind that

my word I'll do as I'm told and do anything you wish!

Sincere regards,

† Felix x x x

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion is tending towards the high cost maintenance, the King's Musketeers are becoming very fashionable.

QMG Adis II has now acquired a large box of carcasses for trial in the field. His plan is for the RNHB to fill each carcass with naphtha, hide them in their sporrans, then approach the enemy pikeman, yank it out and hurl away, breaking the pike formations and allowing the cavalry to swoop in. The carcass, shown here, has been used by our armies on and off since 1672. When worn in the sporrans, they are proving to be also highly effective against a dastardly boot in the privates. What could possibly go wrong?



it is currently appointed by Minister of State Pierre le Sang.

The Jacques As Memorial Stakes horse race will take place in week 4 of April. This race is sponsored by the Crown Prince with a prize pot of 2,000 crowns. Only those taking part in the race may Toady to the prince.

Nick Pinner is looking for more players for his *En Garde!* game set in

Personal

Swindle de Masses, I trust you will enjoy command of the QOC.

† T Cuckpowder

To: Major Jacques ZeLad
13th Fusiliers

Darling,

My sincerest apologies for the teensy-weensy cock-up (if only!) over that dreadful Lt Colonel in your regiment. You need to know that I hold you in the highest esteem and so, when I saw your request that she ought to resign, Trissy and I thought that the least we could do would be to help out. So, armed with several bottles of champagne, wearing our best frocks and concealing a pre-written resignation letter within my undergarments, we turned up at her lodgings with the aim of forcing as much drink down her throat as we could then get her to sign the letter. Unfortunately, we ended up drinking most of the champagne ourselves and what with one thing leading to another the letter fell out and that cow only went and altered it to say I was supporting her remaining in post, rather than her resigning! I think she spiked my drink, darling, to be honest, because I had one of my heads for the next day or two. Anyway, I have taken steps to make amends and now that sobriety has returned you will see I've called for her to go myself.

Best wishes, oodles of kisses and I hope we can make up,

† Felix x x x

To Field Marshal Bill de Zmerchant
Sir,

I am very grateful for your support regarding the position of Heavy Brigade commander. I look forward to ensuring France's reputation of having the finest cavalry in the world is enhanced.

Your Servant,

† Camus

Primus: Have you heard?

Secundus: No, I haven't.

Primus: About the Dragoon and the maiden?

Secundus: What about the Dragoon and the maiden?

Primus: Not content with misspelling the regimental name, he misconceived what part the maiden plays in the story. To summarise, he asked her to put him on a chain.

To the Commander 2nd Army,
General the Count Xavier-Beauregard

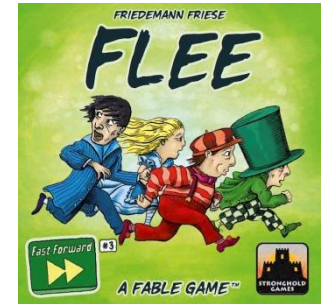
From Major the Baron Jean Ettonique, Dragoon Guards
Sir, I have the honour to request appointment as your Aide de Camp. You will find in me an experienced and much decorated cavalry officer with a strong sword arm and excellent taste in women, horses and wine. I trust that these qualities would make me exceptionally qualified to support you in your duties as commander of the 2nd Army.

Yours faithfully,

† Jean Ettonique

Run away! (*Flee* reviewed)

Flee is the worrying title of the third "Fast Forward" game. It is rather different from the preceding two. To start with, it's a co-operative game, with the players working together to escape 'the Monster'. And there actually is a card with this title. The set-up is a bit more involved, too. There are four characters (cards) to set out – all four take part, regardless of the number of players. These are: Lewis, Alice, the Mad Hatter and Tweedledum (or is it Tweedledee? I can't tell them apart), which tells you how the game is themed.



The characters each start with a specific card in their 'hand' (face-up on the table) and the Monster starts with the character to the right of the starting one. This character now takes their turn, as decided by the players together. First, the character plays a card – they only have one to start with – carries out its effect and places it on the discard pile. If the character then has no cards, they draw a new one from the deck. Play passes clockwise to the next character. The players lose if it is ever the turn of a character who already has the Monster. Eek!

It's no surprise that cards let players shift the Monster, skip a character's turn or reverse the direction of play, thus enabling them not to lose. The tricky part is keeping this up round after round. On the plus side, the cards get more powerful,



What *Flee* looks like in play (only slightly staged)

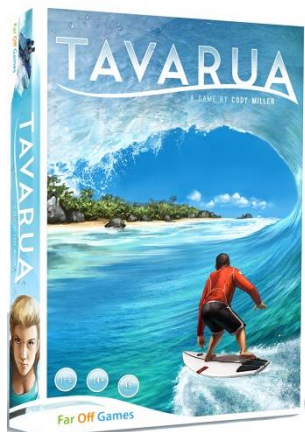
giving the players more opportunities to stave off defeat. However, not all the cards are helpful, so the game also gets trickier and trickier as it goes on.

The deck of cards is divided into 'chapters'. If you lose in chapter one (been there, done that), then the cards go back into sequence for your next game. This should give the players an advantage, assuming they can remember what cards will appear when. Ahem, this is not as simple as it sounds. However, if you've got into chapter two before losing, the cards are reshuffled for the next game, making it much more unpredictable.

You will have noticed that I haven't explained how to win the game. Take it from me that there is a way to win. However, you won't find it until you get deep into the game. I'm not going to take away the thrill (?) of discovering this for yourself. What you can already see is that this is a tough challenge: you must get a long way through the game before discovering how to win and neither is easy. My group is 0 for 2 to date. But at least we now know how to win!

Flee is brilliantly clever, combining some simple ideas to great effect. The result is a really fiendish test for the player/s. The "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" theme is entertaining, though the Monster doesn't really fit in with this (it should be the Queen of Hearts chasing the characters - "off with their heads!"). Personally, I was disappointed by the game. You spend most of the time just trying not to lose, without being able to work towards winning. And, if you keep losing too quickly, you'll never actually find out how to win. I appreciate the cleverness, but find it disheartening. It gets 6/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Flee is a fiendishly clever co-operative card game (#3 in the "Fast Forward" series) designed by Friedemann Friese and published by 2F Spiele (in German) and Stronghold Games (in English). It is for 1-4 players, aged 12+, and a single game takes an hour or so to play. Thanks to Stephen Buonocore of Stronghold Games for providing a review copy.



Surf's Up! Nik Luker reviews *Tavarua*

It is a common complaint amongst gamers that a game's theme is frequently tacked on to its mechanic which, for many, can ruin an otherwise satisfactory gaming experience. It is quite rare to find one where theme and mechanic mesh perfectly, so allow me to bring to your attention a 2016 game which gets pretty close to doing just that, but which seems to have slipped under most people's radar.

I came across *Tavarua* completely by accident whilst mucking about on BoardGameGeek and was

highlanders, tugging at both legs and arms simultaneously to remove the offending body suit, with liberal amounts of goose fat applied to assist the process. When questioned directly, QMG Adis II laughed this off, explaining he had picked up a slight chill and the goose fat was purely medicinal. "Terrible problems with being followed everywhere by a posse of stray cats though..."

Social

Jacques As Memorial Stakes

His Highness the Dauphin is pleased to sponsor the second annual horse race in memory of the late Jacques As: week 4 of April. A pot of 2,000 crowns has been put up and those taking part in the race are welcome to Toady to His Highness afterwards with their ladies.

APRIL BANQUET

Sir Duncan d'Euaneurts requests the pleasure of the company of all gentlemen of note, together with their ladies, at a banquet to be held at the Fleur in the first two weeks of April.

[OOO DdE hosting a party at the Fleur in weeks 1 and 2 for all of SL 14+ and ladies. All costs paid]

B. Gen (Brev.) the Marquis Etienne Brule invites all members of the Dragoon Guards and all gentlemen of SL 16 or greater to join him at Fleur this month (Weeks 1-4, inclusive) to celebrate the launch of his new book "A History of Cavalry from the Earliest Times, with Lessons for the Future". Autographed copies will be

available from the author for 10 cr, with half of the proceeds going to "The Coveted Green Tunic Association", a charity that supports retired and invalidated members of the Regiment. Refreshment provided. Wives and sweethearts welcome.

****PARTY - April Week 2 - Easter Bonnet Parade ****

Gentlemen of Paris

You are hereby invited to bring your ladies to a party at my club, in the second week of April, to show off their Easter Bonnets. Two prizes will be given: the first for the most beauty-enhancing bonnet (as voted for in secret by the ladies themselves); while the most creative endeavour will receive a separate prize.

SL 8+ welcome. Costs paid. Enemy regiments will not be allowed to enter the club. Yours etc, † XM

Military Missives

Greetings,

My Name is Padamus Da Grim and I have just arrived in Paris. I would like to join your illustrious Regiment as a Captain, please. I have an unsurpassed Military Ability [6].

Please contact me soon.

Thanks, † Padamus Da Grim

Bonjour, Monsieur Da Grim.

You would be most welcome. Please report to the regimental barracks at 10 am on Tuesday and ask for Sergeant Stronginthearm. He will conduct your induction.

Bienvenu à GDMD.

Yours etc,

† XM

artillery barrage that causes substantial casualties. Colonel Masses ducks under a bouncing cannonball and survives to receive a brevet promotion (to Brigadier-General). He is Mentioned in Despatches (“good move!”), as well. When a ball hurtles towards him, Jacques ZeLad tries the same trick, but it stays low and splatters him into the mud. RIP.

Jean d’Ice and his battalion of the Cardinal’s Guard are assigned to Frontier regiment 2, which has a quieter month. The Guardsmen chase off some Spanish patrols, which gets Ice a brief Mention and lets him pick up over a hundred crowns or so in booty.

Frontier regiment 4 is the new home for Jacques Diabolick and Jean Ettonique’s Dragoon Guards squadron. Diabolick puts his feet up with the Frontier soldiers while Major Ettonique exercises his troopers frequently. This gets him into the Despatches (“that’s a lot of prancing”), but he wins 100 crowns for his dressage skills.

Sebastian Adis II has fun leading a battalion of the Royal North Highland Borderers, though they don’t see a lot of action. He is Mentioned twice in Despatches (“looks good in a kilt – who knew he had such good knees?”) and picks up a couple of hundred crowns for his sabre dancing skills. ❖



Press

Announcements

To: Officers & men of the Heavy Brigade
Gentlemen,

To ensure the Brigade is accustomed to working together in the field, I give advance warning that we will depart for the front to get some ‘live’ training in May.

Please ensure your affairs are in order for this and the summer campaign.

† Brigadier Sir Chopine Camus

Wanted: a loyal and active subaltern who knows and understands the fleshpots and bordellos from Paris to

wherever we are fighting this summer and can polish a good boot. Your duties as my aide will be light, the fighting somewhat safer and the glory so great it will be shared. Apply to the Office of The Royal Marines, for the attention of Brigadier-General Gaston Le Somme.

Despatches from the Front

Quartermaster General Adis II has remained with the RNHB. Rumours that he missed the boat back to Paris as he could not remove his Tan-go patented all weather suit are false; though our reporter has talked to a source who suggested it took 4 burly

immediately attracted by its theme – surfing. Not many out there of that ilk, I’m sure you’ll agree! The designer and publisher were both unknown to me, but after a quick read through the online rules I decided to take a punt and ordered a copy.

So what’s it all about? Players are competitors in a surfing competition vying to catch waves as they break. They ride those waves, performing various tricks for as long as possible before bailing or wiping out, thereby amassing a score for each wave. At the end of the game, players combine their best two scores for both long and short boards; best overall score wins. Each player has two surfboard tokens (a longboard and a shortboard, each distinctively shaped), a surfer (meeple) of matching colour, a double sided mat (longboard on one side, shortboard on the reverse) and a balance marker plus a set of score tokens.

The game is card driven and there are three different decks. The Player deck features cards which are used to take actions. These are nicely illustrated with various surfing manoeuvres and each bears a number and a forwards or backwards pointing arrow, more about which later. The second (Wave) deck features double-sided cards giving information about, surprise, surprise, waves for the current round and serves as the game’s timer. The third (Stoke) deck consists of cards giving one-off special actions which can only be obtained via the use of Stoke tokens (again, more about these later).

Players start the game with five Player cards and one Stoke token each. Surfers and boards are placed on the bottom of the game board (the shore), each player selecting which surfboard he will ride first by laying his surfer on said board, flipping his mat to the matching side and placing his balance marker on its central space. And so to the game board itself. This is divided horizontally into seven zones – the aforementioned shore and six sea zones numbered 1 (closest to shore) to 6 (furthest from shore) – and three columns – the break, the wash and the channel. Six wave tiles are placed in the spaces of the break column then a six-sided die is rolled and placed on each one.

The game is played over a series of short rounds, each round consisting





of three phases. In phase one, the wave tiles are moved one zone closer to the shore, the one reaching the shore being placed back at the top of the board and its die re-rolled. Players then choose actions, simultaneously playing cards from their hand face down and drawing back up to five. In phase two, players reveal and resolve their actions. In phase three, the top card of the Wave deck is revealed and resolved and

any completed waves are scored. If any cards remain in the Wave deck after this phase, a new round begins. If not, the game ends. All nice, clean and simple. But now for the clever stuff...

The position of a player's surfer on the game board relative to the position of the waves determines which actions will be available to him. All actions involve playing one or more cards from the hand next to a player's mat, the position beside the mat determining the action to be taken. When on the shore only two actions are feasible: Paddle Out or Wait. Waiting allows a player to discard any number of cards to draw new ones at the start of the next round, while Paddling Out moves a player out into the channel a number of spaces equal to the value of the card played.

Once in the channel, two more actions become available: Paddle In (the exact opposite of Paddle Out) and Catch which allows a player to move onto the adjacent wave tile. However, it's not quite that simple: a wave must be broken before it can be caught. In other words, the value showing on the die on the wave tile must equal or exceed the adjacent value printed on the board. A simple but very effective mechanic. If successful, the player moves his board and surfer onto the relevant wave tile and immediately moves the balance marker on his player mat forwards or backwards a number of spaces denoted by the arrow and value of the card he played. If this causes the marker to move off either end of the mat, the player has Wiped Out, which any self-respecting surfer knows is not good!

Having successfully caught a wave, a player has two actions available for subsequent rounds: Ride or Bail. Riding a wave involves playing a card and adjusting for balance as above, the card being placed in the player's score pile if successful. Bailing allows a player to discard one or more cards (value is irrelevant in this case) and to move his surfer and board back into the adjacent channel space thus abandoning his wave. Why Bail? It's all to do with scoring. Ideally a player will catch a good wave and ride that wave right in to shore (the player's surfer will move one space closer to shore each round as the wave tile

spending the second half of the month in the club are: Charles and Emma and Gaston and Bess.

The Horse Guards club gets its first visitors for some time. New member Simon Alfred Devereux rolls up in the last week of March to take a look at the place – it's much more salubrious than the Bawdyhouse he was in the week before. He is joined by a guest, Padamus Da Grim.

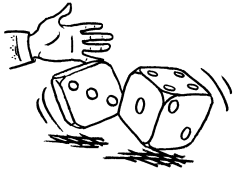
The Frog & Peach has quite a few guests, starting with L'Inconnu (formerly 'X1') and his good friend, Anna Rexique. They remain for the month. Padamus Da Grim is there for the first half of the month before hitting the Bawdyhouses. Vulson de Chalais rolls up in week two and stays for three weeks. He's on his own, despite succeeding in his courting – as Sebastian Adis II will be only too aware. After two weeks' disappointment outside Bothwell's, Xavier arrives at the club for the second half of March with Betty Kant for company. The final member is Robert d'Lancier, popping in for a week after he's failed at two courting attempts and then working off his frustration with his cutlass.

The gyms are really busy this month. Bernard de Lur-Saluces, Duncan d'Eauneurts, Felix Antoine Gauchepied'er, Jacques de Gain and Terence Cuckpowder all spend their entire month working out with their weapons. That's sabre for Terence, dagger for Felix (though he may just be cleaning his nails) and rapier for everyone else. Balzac Slapdash follows a classic pattern: his first week is in the Bawdyhouses, then he puts in three weeks with his rapier. It looks like Raoul Bernard de Chenin Blanc is following the same pattern: he starts in the red light district and moves on to the gym, but only practises rapier for two weeks before he disappears to visit his lady friend for further female company. Augustin Fourier is the third man in the Bawdyhouses at the start of March. He has two weeks' sabre practice before being hauled back to barracks for his week supervising his Dragoon troopers.

Amant d'Au practises his knifework for just three weeks, but only because he takes the last week off. Once he's been to his club, Beau Reese Jean Seine gets his rapier and spends three weeks with it. Chopine Camus follows his Toadying with three weeks' practice with his sabre. After his club visit in week 1, Frele d'Acier retires to his gym with his sabre. Guido Spoons does the same, though his first week is a (successful) courting expedition. Practising for two weeks are Alan de Frocked (rapier), Florent Sans de Machine (rapier), Henri Dubois (sabre), Inigo Montoya (rapier), Jean Jeanie (rapier), Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles (cutlass) and Uther Xavier-Beauregard (sabre).

Step 3: catch the ball

Two of this month's volunteers join Frontier regiment 1: Jacques ZeLad and Swindelle d'Masses. Major ZeLad is heartily welcomed by the frontier soldiers – he's brought a few cases of wine with him. The whole regiment is caught in an



Etienne Brule brings Belle Epoque and passes Pierre his usual purse. He is flush, as usual, and makes his way to the gaming tables where he lays a series of substantial wagers. He wins two, but loses three, leaving him out of pocket, but ahead on status. Frele d'Acier escorts Freda De Ath. Jacky Tinne accompanies Jean Jeanie. Minister

of State Pierre le Sang brings Guinevere d'Arthur. The new PMG, Richard Shapmes, is also in the club, entertaining Kathy Pacific. Henrietta Carrotte's entertainer is Uther Xavier-Beauregard.

Pierre (and Guinevere) and Richard (and Kathy) are the only ones who remain in the Fleur all month. Apart from Etienne, whose arrangements are different. In week two he and Belle host Bill de Zmerchant, the following week their roles are reversed: Bill (now with Ada Andabettoir at his side) hosts Etienne and Belle. Plus Uther and Henrietta. Bill maintains the club's high traditions: carousing mightily and throwing bread rolls at the staff. Etienne continues his gambling efforts, placing five bets each week. In week 2 he cuts one bet when the house rolls high, then wins two and loses two. He cuts again in week 3, but then loses three and only wins one. Bill spends the last week at home with Ada.

Sebastian de la Creme arrives in the Fleur in week 2 with Di and they return for the rest of the month. Etienne and Belle are back for week four and for another series of wagers. This is Etienne's worst week: he loses four and wins just the one. Overall, he's lost a few thousand crowns this month, but his social standing has improved.



In the lesser clubs

Down the road in Bothwell's, Was Nae Me is holding a party over the first half of March. Attendance suffers for two reasons: lots of people are at the horse race in the first week and Was has raised the entry requirements, so another group doesn't get in. Let's start with the first week: Was and Vera Cruz welcome Louis Oeuf Ur Terribles and Sue Briquet. That's it. Left kicking their heels outside are Florent Sans de Machine, Henri Dubois, Simon Alfred Devereux and Xavier Money. Watching with amusement is the other member in the club, Leonard de Hofstadt, and his companion, Frances Forrin.

The turnout for Was gets better in the second week. Louis and Sue are there again, to start with. Joining them are Alan and Madelaine, Charles and Emma, Gaz on his own, Inigo and Deb, Jean and Jacky. This is a convivial group with no friction. However, Florent, Simon and Xavier are still stuck outside. Henri has thought better of it, though, and headed off to the Bawdyhouses for some female company. Was and Vera remain in Bothwell's for the rest of the month, but without any guests. Leonard and Frances are there, too. Other members

moves down the board) whereupon he will gain a score based on the total value of the cards in his score pile for that wave plus a small bonus.

It can happen though, that a player's hand would force him to Wipe Out no matter what. In this event, Bailing is the best option as it allows all the cards in the score pile for the current wave to be tallied, whereas Wiping Out allows only the single highest value card in the pile to be scored and furthermore dumps the surfer into the wash from where the only action available is Recover, causing the player to discard a card and return to shore (effectively missing a turn).

On top of all this there is a further wrinkle provided by the Wave deck. The backs of these cards bear forward or backwards (sometimes both) pointing arrows and a range of values (e.g. 0-1, 2-3) providing a limited amount of information about the true value of the card. At the end of each round the top card of the deck is turned face-up and all players who have caught or are riding a wave must adjust their balance markers on their player mats as directed by the card. This forces a degree of forward planning on the players, but adds just the right amount of risk for those who like to live a little more dangerously!

And then there are the Stoke cards. These provide small, one-time only advantages none of which are super powerful, but when played at the right time can be most useful. They can only be obtained, however, in exchange for Stoke tokens and only when a surfer is at shore. Stoke tokens are gained in three ways: by taking a Catch action, by riding a wave to shore and whenever a player wipes out.

Besides buying Stoke cards, Stoke tokens can be used to alter the value of action cards by +1 or -1 per token. Tokens played on a card may stay on that card when it enters a score pile and in this event each token counts as +1 when the card is scored. Add in the extra chrome of Perfect Wave tokens (a bonus for catching a wave as it breaks), Hang Ten tokens (a bonus for riding a longboard in a particular way) and the risky, but exciting, barrel waves (which have to be handled differently depending on the type of board being ridden) and you have a very satisfying package indeed.

Tavarua is great fun. It's no brain burner, but it does require plenty of interesting little decisions during its 45 minute duration. And that 45 minutes provides just enough time pressure to create a fair bit of angst. To have a realistic chance of winning, a player will need to make at least four runs (2 per type of board) as, in the final scoring, each player totals his best two scores for



each board, the player with the highest total in each type being declared that board's champion. The shortboard champ and the longboard champ each then compare their respective scores for their other type of board to determine the overall winner. So is it best to try to grab a wave a long way from shore and ride it right in, which may well amass a decent individual score but will take some time, or is it better to make a couple of shorter runs for lower scores but a possibly better overall score? And when is the best time to switch boards?

Coupled with all of this is the battle, when riding a wave, to maintain balance. Clearly it is most desirable to get high value cards into one's score pile, but the balance shift caused by these makes them difficult to play without careful planning and attention to the potential balance shift caused by the round's wave card. All good stuff. The game's mechanisms all fit together seamlessly, play is smooth and quick – it has clearly been well playtested. Production quality is also excellent – good quality card stock, well-illustrated cards and some very nice details like the six custom 6-sided dice and the individually coloured and illustrated surfboard tokens and player mats.

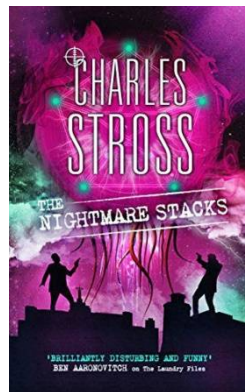
As I said at the start, mechanisms and theme fit beautifully and it all adds up to a fine playing experience. Perhaps the best thing about the game, however, is how it *feels*. The designer, Cody Miller, is a surfer. If it was his intention to try give us an idea of what surfing is actually like, I'd say he's certainly got close. *Tavarua* is exciting, fun, requires some planning skills and a healthy degree of risk taking. So what are you waiting for? Dig out your Bermuda shorts, stick some Beach Boys on the hi-fi and go ride that wave!

Tavarua was designed by Cody Miller and is published by Far Off Games (www.faroffgames.com). It is a surfing board game for 1–6 players, aged 14+, and takes about 45 minutes to play.

Reading Matter

I don't seem to be catching up with Charles Stross's "Laundry" novels. I've recently finished *The Nightmare Stacks*, which was published in 2016. The next in the series came out last year and there's another scheduled for 2018! I'll just have to read faster.

As you may well be aware, the Laundry is the most secret of Britain's secret services: the one that deals with magical and occult threats. And, since magic is simply a matter of the right mathematical formulae, the advent of personal computers means there's more and more of it about. The books follow the adventures of Bob Howard, a programmer who discovers he can do magic and, like many another, is then made an offer he can't refuse and



Richard Shapmes is a Lt-General and now becomes a Provincial Military Governor. His Majesty assigns him to Normandy, where he can keep an eye on both the troublesome English and the equally troublesome locals.

Buying his way to Captain (Major wasn't available) means Robert d'Lancier no longer qualifies to become an Aide to a Brigadier-General. Jean Ettonique is fine as a Major, though – mainly because he's accepting the post of Aide to a General. General Uther Xavier-Beauregard, to be precise. This moves him into Second Army for the summer campaign.

Runners and Riders

The big event of March is, of course, the horse race sponsored by Sebastian de la Creme. A select group gathers at the Prix d'Or, headed by Sebastian and Di Lemmere. Alan de Froked, Chopine Camus, Gaz Moutarde and Inigo Montoya all sign up to race against Sebastian. Madelaine de Proust is there to cheer on Alan; Sheila Kiwi is Chopin's supporter and Inigo has Deb Estaround to encourage him. Joining them in the grandstand are Charles Louis Desapear, accompanied by Emma Roides, and Gaston le Somme, escorting Bess Ottede.

Chopine and Inigo have the advantage of their cavalry experience, but Gaz is the favourite – just for his small size. He is a quick starter, leading the pack into the first corner. Inigo is right on his tail, with Chopine just behind him. Alan is a close fourth, but there's a bit of a gap to Sebastian, who's having trouble getting any speed out of his horse.

Rounding the corner, the riders give their horses their heads. Alan and Sebastian's steeds respond best, going at what can only be described as flat out. Chopine's mount is slightly slower, but Gaz's horse is not responding and Inigo's appears to be walking. This means Alan catches up to Chopine by the time they reach the second corner. Both of them are only just ahead of Gaz, despite his lack of pace. Sebastian is neck and neck with Inigo, though they are a good length down on the others.

Leaving the second corner, the riders apply their spurs for the final straight. Chopine's horse maintains the same pace, sprinting for the line and taking first place. However, Alan's mount can't match that and slows dramatically. Alan holds on to second place, but he is several lengths down and only half a length ahead of Gaz, whose horse maintains its pace to bring him in third. Continuing to walk, Inigo's horse ambles to the finish, alongside Sebastian. The latter's steed is clearly in trouble and only just makes it to the finish line before collapsing. Cursing, Sebastian commandeers a pistol to finish it off. Prizes awarded, there are drinks in the bar for all those attending while Sebastian opens negotiations to buy a new horse.

Away from the race, there's quite a gathering of members in the Fleur de Lys. Minister Beau Reese Jean Seine is there with Maggie Nifisent. Chancellor

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses

Being a correspondence game of *En Garde!* run by Pevans since April 1986 and now published as part of *To Win Just Once*.

New players are always welcome. If you'd like to play, you'll need to subscribe to *TWJO* (see page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**). You will also need (access to) a copy of the published rules to *En Garde!* (see www.engarde.co.uk).

Orders for April 1670 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by Friday 16th February 2018



March 1670 (313)

It's officially the first day of Spring, though Paris doesn't seem to have noticed. However, in the Spring, young men's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of... active service. As Brigade Major of First Foot, Colonel Jacques Diabolick does not have a command, so he volunteers for a Frontier regiment. Cardinal's Guard Major Jean d'Ice does have a command: the second battalion of his regiment. He orders them into action, leading them to the frontier himself.

Major Jean Ettonique is in charge of the Dragoon Guards' second squadron and takes them into action. First battalion of the 13th Fusiliers is under Major Jacques ZeLad, but he opts to join the Frontier troops. His position as QMG means Brigadier-General Sebastian Adis II is not in charge of any troops, but decides to return to 'his' battalion in the Royal North Highlanders.

Swindelle d'Masses is Lieutenant-Colonel in and commander of the Queen's Own Carabiniers and buys his way to Colonel. He wants to see some action. However, he's also serving as Brigade Major of the Horse Guards, which means no-one is actually under his orders. It'll be a Frontier regiment for Masses.

Beau Reese Jean Seine calls in some favours to make sure the commander of First Army steps down. The position remains vacant through the month.

New boy Padamus Da Grim signs up for Grand Duke Max's Dragoons, into which Lt-Colonel Xavier Money happily accepts him. His new loan more than covers the purchase of a Captaincy (and a horse).

co-opted into the Laundry. Where he gets to battle monsters from other dimensions and manage Windows Server.

As far as I'm concerned, what makes the books so appealing is author Charles Stross poking fun at bureaucracy, office politics and marketing-speak against the background of battling nameless horrors. In the more recent volumes, he's taken on different fantasy tropes and given them his own twist in setting them in the world of the Laundry. He's also started to put other characters centre stage. And this is the case with *The Nightmare Stacks*, number 7 in the series and the latest for me. Warning: what follows is a bit of a spoiler.

For this book, our 'hero' is Alex Schwartz, ex-banker and now vampire as the result of an unfortunate side-effect of dabbling too deeply in stock trading algorithms – as detailed in *The Rhesus Chart* (number 5 in the series and reviewed in *TWJO* 163). Alex has been assigned the pretty humdrum task of finding a location for the Laundry's regional HQ – cue much bureaucratic form-filling. Unfortunately, he's also at ground zero for an invasion by beings from another dimension.

Thus we get Stross's take on Elves. Not Tolkien's world-weary immortals, nor even the spiteful tricksters of folklore (though they're closer). No, these elves are a modern army with their own air force, all powered by necromancy. They're looking for a new home – and slaves to sacrifice. In large numbers. Stross takes time to develop the threat these creatures pose before the invasion begins. The question then is how will Britain's police and military respond? Once they've completed the appropriate risk assessments, of course.

The Nightmare Stacks is a very entertaining read, with an excellent plot twist at the end – though it isn't a complete surprise. There's also an interesting development for the main characters at the end. However, I found less humour in this book than the previous ones. It's also become clear that the world of the Laundry is not our world: things have changed too much (while, in the early books, you could believe that all this was taking place behind the scenes in the real world). I enjoyed it, though, and will be moving on to number eight, *The Delirium Brief*, and the return of Bob Howard in due course.

I've also gone a bit retro by picking up the Laundry novellas that date back to 2010 (and one from 2013). These all feature Bob Howard and the usual mixture of occult horror, humour and a different view of fantasy tropes. In *Overtime*, *Down on the Farm* and *Equoid* we get Stross's take on Santa Claus and unicorns, amongst other things. These were very much to my taste as Bob blunders (though he's actually rather more savvy than he gives himself credit for) his way through some very nasty threats – and the associated paperwork. Cracking stuff and all recommended. Though, as always, I recommend starting with the first Laundry novel, *The Atrocity Archives*, and working your way through.

Games Events

Coming up in February is the eleventh SoRCon, which I think has now out-lived its predecessor (SoR is Son-of-Ramsdencon). It's held at the Holiday Inn in Basildon over the weekend (Friday-Sunday) of 23rd-25th February. It's essentially open gaming with a substantial board games library to augment what people bring. Accommodation is, of course, available on site. For more details, visit the website at: www.sorcon.co.uk

This box concentrates on events I expect to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets every Wednesday evening, upstairs at The Shipwright's Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (a few minutes' walk from London Bridge station). For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

Games Games Games Days: from noon(-ish) on the second Saturday of most months at the Allsop Arms (137 Gloucester Place, London NW1 5AL). The pub has an extensive menu as well as good beer and is convenient for Baker Street and Marylebone stations and a short walk from Bond Street Tube station.

UK Games Expo: 1st-3rd June 2018 at the NEC (Hall 1 and Hilton Metropole). This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with a huge trade hall plus demonstration and participation games and guests. For gamers there are lots of tournaments and open gaming. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: the board games event of the year. 25th-28th October 2018, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.merz-verlag-en.com

MidCon: 2nd-4th November 2018 at the Hallmark Hotel in Derby. **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention in a decent hotel. See www.midcon.org.uk.

For more extensive information on UK board games events, try The Queen's Lane Advertiser at www.boardgamers.org.uk/qla.php

Games from Pevans

Mail order board and card games in the UK



Coal Baron: The Great Card Game

Clever adaptation of the cracking board game that offers much the same challenges in mining and selling coal – and in doing a better job than your opponents. (Note this is the English & German edition from eggertspiele using the German title.)

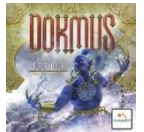
For 2-4 players, aged 10+, playing time 60 minutes, **special purchase: £12.00**



Dokmus: Return of Erefel

Neat expansions for clever strategy game *Dokmus*. Erefel is a new 'Guardian', providing players another option each round. While new tiles allow players to expand faster without making scoring easier.

For 2-4 players, aged 10+, playing time 45 minutes: **£15.00**



Indian Summer

A sequel to *Cottage Garden*, this is a weightier game. The aim is to be the first to completely fill your board, though 'treasures' are useful, too, as they give you extra actions. The game is a pleasure to play, with the gorgeous colours making it a delight to look at.

For 1-4 players, aged 10+, playing time 15 minutes/player: **£32.00**



Photosynthesis

This looks wonderful, too, with its 3D cardboard trees. The idea is to plant your trees to use energy from the sun, while blocking it from your opponents. There's plenty to think about, but the game plays quickly, providing an entertaining challenge.

For 2-4 players, aged 8+, playing time 15 minutes/player: **£32.00**



Queendomino

Queendomino introduces knights (meeples), which generate coins, which can be used to buy town tiles and tower pieces to provide special abilities and/or points. It's very much *Kingdomino* with knobs on, but the knobs really do enhance the game.

For 2-4 players, aged 8+, playing time 25 minutes: **£25.00**



Online at www.pevans.co.uk/Games

the grid and numbers (1-20) up and down (thus A1 is the top left corner).

The first hit on each animal scores points in proportion to its size. For example, a Lion is three squares and worth 15 points, so the first hit scores $15/3 = 5$ points. If several players hit the same square at the same time, they share the points; if several players hit different squares of the same animal at the same time, they get the points for the square they hit.

Once an animal has been identified, subsequent shots share the points of the square they hit (there are no points left for the square(s) hit initially) with a minimum score of 1 point. So if players A and B hit the second square of that lion and C gets the third, C gets 5 points and A and B get $2\frac{1}{2}$ each.

An animal is dead when all its squares have been hit. No more points can be scored for this animal. After 10 turns or when the board is clear (except for any snakes), the player with the most points wins.

**Send your shots to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or
to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by Monday, 19th February 2018.**

Online Games

TWJO readers are welcome to join in the various online board games we're playing. Let me know what games you'd like to play and I'll add you in.

Brass game 59 (at brass.orderofthehammer.com) was the third win in a row for Mike (with 144 points). Second was our ringer, 'khalifa', on 140. Steve was third with 135 points and yours truly was last with 120. Game 60 is under way and I'll set up another: the password will be pevans56.

Keyflower is annoying me: I keep being shut out of bids, which is so frustrating. Despite this, I managed to come second in my last game. I'm not sure the current game will end as well. Let me have your ID at BoardGameArena.com and I'll invite you into a game.

Our eighth game of *Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization* (at boardgaming-online.com) is nearing an end. There's always room for more players – if you'd like to join us, let me know.

Our latest game of *Pax Porfiriana* (at yucata.de) ended quickly with a win for me, taking over from El Presidente. We've moved on to another game, which is building up nicely. More players are welcome: let me know if you'd like to join in.

Meanwhile, *Power Grid (Funkenschlag)* is proving as tough online as in real life. Who'd like to give it a go at famdepau.nl?

The latest online implementation at BoardGameArena.com is *Innovation*, which I'm a real fan of. A quick learning game let me get to grips with the interface and now I'm looking for opponents. Who's in?

Voyager (Star Trader game 9)

Turn 3

"And what now?"

"Le Gros Fromage wants us to increase Spice Production."

"And I see we have orders to collect for delivery. At last. I was dying of boredom."

FATCAT beat RED STAR LINES and TRANSURANIC by bidding 5 HTs and buying all 17 Alloys available at Gamma Leporis for that price. They were made Contractors as well.

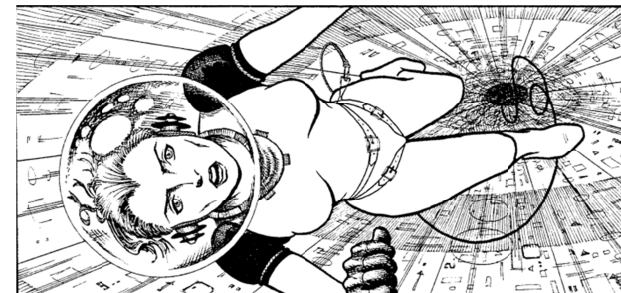
TRANSURANIC bought 4 Alloys for 3 HTs each at Epsilon Eridani, in part compensation.

Delta Pavonis saw COSTRA NOSTRA II selling 4 Alloys for 9 HTs each and then buying 4 Petroleum for 8 HTs apiece. They were outbid by RED STAR LINES, who bought 8 Petroleum for 9 HTs each and took a Contractorship, but there was enough Market left for COSTRA. RED STAR LINES were unconcerned. They also sold 8 Isotopes for 8 HTs each and gained a Dealership on top.

At Mu Herculis INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES sold 8 Isotopes for 9 HTs each and got a Dealership. Thanks to better circumstances than the previous quarter, they were also able to buy 8 Petroleum for 8 HTs apiece and gained a second Dealership. Meanwhile RED STAR LINES' bid to buy Monopoles was cut when the price held up, but they managed to buy 6 Monopoles for 13 HTs each and also were made Dealers.

SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS were selling 3 Monopoles at a price of 12 HTs each at Sigma Draconis and bought 10 Spice for 12 HTs each, taking a Dealership. COSTRA NOSTRA had already sold 4 Spice for 10 HTs each. Perhaps they should talk. RED STAR LINES stepped in and bought 12 Isotopes for 6 HTs each and gained their fourth Market Position of the Quarter.

TRANSURANIC TRADING sold 6 Isotopes for 9 HTs each at Alpha Centauri and made a Dealership. They used Agent Percent to sell 6 Spice at the top Market



price. They wanted to buy Liquors, but were beaten to it by SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS, who bought 9 for 12 HTs apiece and gained the Corporation's second Dealership of the Quarter.

FATCAT, by dint of winning the initiative, managed to load all their ships with Passengers to the high level Spaceports.

SOLAR SPICE AND LIQUORS improved their Reputation still further, but ran out of funds when wishing to improve their Business Connections.

SWISS MERCENARY FLEET added a further Spice Factory to their production capacity and moved their shipping to take advantage of the position.

INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES shuffled their pods. The streamlined Flute vanished from the Spaceport and is believed to have loaded Weapons on Planet, though this is unconfirmed by management. Reputation was improved slightly and a fifth Cargo pod bought for the Stacey.

COSTRA NOSTRA PIZZA INC bought another Alloy Factory at Gamma Leporis.

OXFORDS NOT BROGUES bought B class crew for their new ship.

News

INTERSIDEREAL NOVICES took Turn 5 B8, P6
OP 33 from Turn 4. Turn 7 **B1, C3**

There were two new News chits this turn. The current list (new chits in **bold**) is:
Turn 4 B8 (Chits are identified by the Connection type and level required to see them and disappear/take effect in the News Phase of the turn listed.)

Corporation Table

Corporation letter and name	Connections Bus/Crim/Pol	Init'v Bid	Turn order	Cash	Rep	Player
A Costra Nostra Pizza Inc	7 0 2	0	5th	69	22	Mark Cowper
B Oxfords not Brogues	1 0 7	0	6th	14	27	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
C FATCAT	3 0 7	7	3rd	189	26	Jerry Elsmore
D Solar Spice & Liquors	5 0 6	0+4	2nd	83	40	Paul Evans
E Swiss Mercenary Fleet	2 0 5	0	8th	164	26	Martin Jennings
F Smitten Kitten	4 0 7	0	9th	180	22	Michael Martinkat
H Intersidereal Novices	3 7 2	6	1st	25	32	Mateusz Ochman
J Red Star Lines	6 7 1	0	7th	32	33	Przemek Orwat
K Transuranic Trading	5 0 7	0	4th	297	30	Bob Parkins
N under Initiative Bid means No move received, F indicates the Corp was floated						

The Lion that was expected to become a "colander" this turn almost escapes, but Paul Wilson takes the crucial shot.

Those who don't shoot at the Lion see mixed results with several more animals now exposed. Tim Macaire even gets a Snake - but it won't be there next turn.

Nike Luker is still in the lead, but Tim is on his tail. So to speak.

Key

Animals	Symbol	Size (squares)	Number on grid	Points Value
Bush	B	1	12	0
Monkey	M	1	12	4
Antelope	A	2	9	8
Snake	S	2	?	10
Gorilla	G	3	6	12
Lion	L	3	3	15
Elephant	E	4	2	20

Other symbols

	X	Missed shot
UPPER CASE = this turn, lower case = last turn, Strikeout = dead animal		

Notes: animals go up and down or left and right, not diagonally, with two exceptions. Elephants are blocks of four squares; each Snake is two diagonal squares and moves by up to three squares a turn.

Scores

Animals only touch (if at all) at corners and only Snakes will go next to a Bush.

Player	Shots	This turn	Total
Alex Bardy	M19,D4	0	4
Chris Bavlis	R3	1	10
Charles Burrows	C14	4	7.83
Mark Cowper	R3	1	6
Mike Dommett	C11	4	8
Jerry Elsmore			3.5
Bill Hay			3.25
Andy Kendall	L9,M8	2	5.5
Rob Lee	R3	1	2
Nik Luker	M8	2	12.5
Tim Macaire	R18	5	11.33
Dave Marsden			3.5
Graeme Morris	C5,M16	0	3.5
Rob Pinkerton	R3	1	2
Gerald Udowiczenko			2.58
Pam Udowiczenko	Q10,D4	0	2
Matt Wale	J11,R3	1	4.25
Graeme Wilson	K8,L16	0	5
Paul Wilson	R4	5	7.5

What's this about?

This game is essentially a variation of *Battle-ships* and is open to all readers of *TWJO*. The 20 x 20 grid represents an African safari park where a population explosion means the animals must be culled. The players are trophy hunters allowed in to carry out the cull.

All you have to do each turn is nominate two squares to take pot-shots at: F9 and M17, say (the second is only used if the first misses). Letters (A-T) run across

Trophy Hunter

Turn 5

This turn's shots

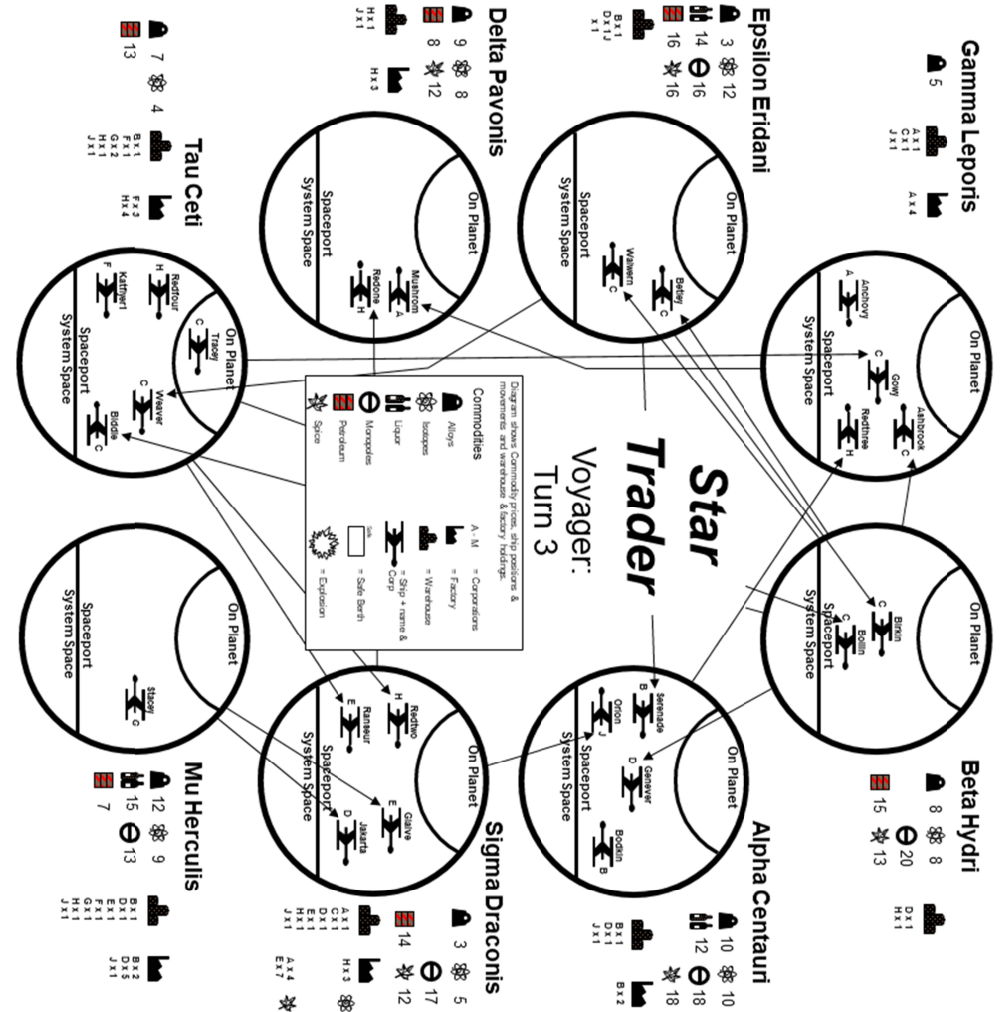
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
1	♄																			
2													X							
3																		♃		
4				X														♃		
5			X														X	♃	X	X
6										♁		X						X		
7								X		♁	X	X	X							
8							e	e		♁	X		A							
9							e	e		X		X								
10																			X	
11			A							X										
12											X			X						
13																				
14	x		G			e	e													
15						e	e													
16											X	X			X					
17																				
18			♁	♁														S		
19													X						X	
20																				

Note the name change – there's some discussion in the Chatter above (pages 3-4). Alex Bardy points out that "Mike Dommett didn't get his 4 points added last turn, but I'm sure I'm not the only one that points that out". Yes, you are. Not even Mike mentioned it...

Mike himself asks, "Hang on, how did I become a short, waistline-challenged explorer?" Does anybody know what he's talking about.

GM Notes

Orders for next turn to Mike Dommett, 119 Victoria Road, Alton GU34 2DD or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk by Friday, 9th February 2018



Obama (*Railway Rivals* game 12 - RR2332IL)

Game report - Turn 11

Race results					Scores			
					TRUMP	ACR	CR	UCR
36	KH	Indiana	9S	Murphysboro	10+7-6		20-7+6	
37	7H	Aurora	10D	St Louis		20	0-2	10-2
38	5H	Chicago	JC	Dixon		20	10	0
39	4S	Danville	5D	Pekin	20+9	10-9		
40	5S	Mt Carmel	2C	Wisconsin	20-7	+7		
41	QS	Kentucky	8C	Clinton	0 JR	0 JR+5	20-5	10
42	10C	Burlington	9D	St Louis				20
43	10S	Cairo	9H	Joliet			20+2	10-2
44	4H	Chicago	JD	St Louis		20	10-2	0+2
TOTAL					53	73	72	48

JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers

UPTHUR CREEK RAILS fall back a little, but are probably too far ahead to be caught. AMERICAN CENTRAL RAILWAY stay just ahead of CANNIS RAILWAYS. TYRANNICAL RACISM UNDER MY PRESIDENCY brings up the rear at the moment. Changing their name won't help.

Builds and scores

TYRANNICAL RACISM UNDER MY PRESIDENCY (TRUMP), Gerald Udowiczzenko - Black
Builds: none
Points: 190 +53 = 243

AMERICAN CENTRAL RAILWAY (ACR), Jonathan Palfrey - Green
Builds: none
Points: 305 +73 = 378

CANNIS RAILWAYS (CR), Paul Evans - Blue
Builds: None
Points: 282 +72 = 354

UPTHUR CREEK RAILS (UCR), Mike Clibborn-Dyer - Red
Builds: None
Points: 390 +48 = 438

GM Notes

Players may enter up to 6 races plus any held over from previous turns.

Final Turn of races and I'd appreciate Game End Statements with your final orders.

The next map will be London and Hampshire. This map will take 6 players.

Next turn's races

Race	From		To	
45	3C	Waukegam	8S	Marion
46	JS	Paducah	AD	Quincy
47	KD	Missouri	AH	Chicago
48	4C	Elgin	10H	Kankakee
49	5C	Rockford	6D	Springfield
50	AS	Terre Haute	6H	Chicago
51	9C	Davenport	JH	Bloomington
52	3D	Peoria	3S	Champaign

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The table on the right shows the costs for the paper edition, including postage.

Paper edition	UK	Europe	World
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£27.00	£45.00	£55.00

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